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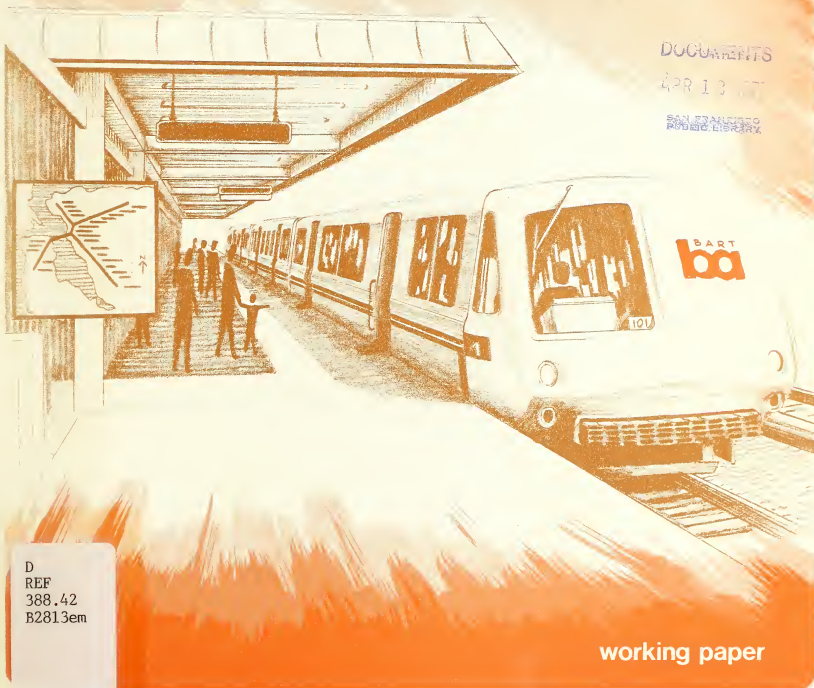
# bart impact program

## THE SPECIAL STUDY OF ETHNIC MINORITIES IN THE BART IMPACT PROGRAM

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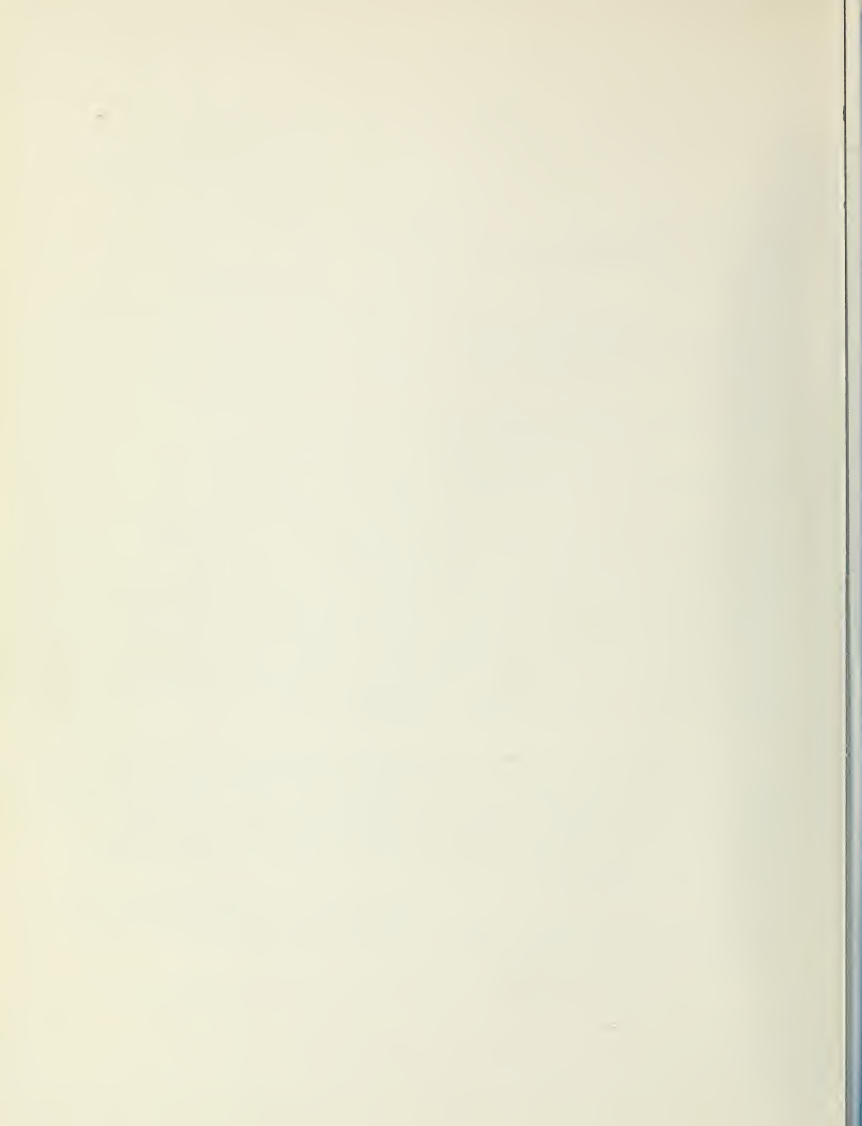
WORKING PAPER

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## BART: THE BAY AREA RAPID TRANSIT SYSTEM

- Length:** The 71-mile system includes 20 miles of subway, 24 miles on elevated structures and 27 miles at ground level. The subway sections are in San Francisco, Berkeley, downtown Oakland, the Berkeley Hills Tunnel and the Transbay Tube.
- Stations:** The 34 stations include 13 elevated, 14 subway and 7 at ground level. They are spaced at an average distance of 2.1 miles: stations in the downtowns are less than 1/4-mile apart while those in suburban areas are 2 to 4 miles apart. Parking lots at 23 stations have a total of 19,000 spaces. There is a fee (25¢) at only one of the parking lots. BART and local agencies provide bus service to all stations.
- Trains:** Trains are from 4 to 10 cars long. Each car is 70 feet long and has 72 seats. Top speed is 80 mph with an average speed of 38 mph including station stops. All trains stop at all stations on the route.
- Automation:** Trains are automatically controlled by the central computer at BART headquarters. A train operator on-board each train can over-ride automatic controls in an emergency.

Magnetically encoded tickets with values up to \$20 are issued by vending machines. Automated fare gates at each station compute the appropriate fare and deduct it from the ticket value. At least one agent is present at each station to assist patrons.

- Fares:** Fares range from 25¢ to \$1.45, depending upon trip length. Discount fares are available for the physically handicapped, children 12 and under and persons 65 and over.

- Service:** BART serves the counties of Alameda, Contra Costa and San Francisco, which have a combined population of 2.4 million. The system was opened in five stages, from September, 1972, to September, 1974. The last section to open was the Transbay Tube linking Oakland and the East Bay with San Francisco and the West Bay.

Routes are identified by the terminal stations: Daly City in the West Bay, Richmond, Concord and Fremont in the East Bay. Trains operate every 12 minutes during the daytime on three routes: Concord - Daly City, Fremont - Daly City, Richmond - Fremont. This results in 6-minute train frequencies in San Francisco, downtown Oakland and the Fremont line where routes converge. In the evening, trains are dispatched every 20 minutes on only the Richmond - Fremont and Concord - Daly City routes. Service is provided weekdays only, between 6 A.M. and midnight. Future service will include a Richmond - Daly City route and weekend service. Trains will operate every 6 minutes on all routes during the peak periods of travel.

- Patronage:** Approximately 130,000 one-way trips are made each day. 200,000 trips are anticipated under full service conditions.

- Cost:** BART construction and equipment cost \$1.6 billion, financed primarily from local funds: \$942 million from bonds being repaid by the property and sales taxes in the three counties, \$176 million from toll revenues of transbay bridges, \$315 million from federal grants, and \$186 million from interest earnings and other sources.



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## Introduction

This paper is an examination of one aspect of the BART Impact Program, its evaluation of impacts of the system on ethnic minorities. It is primarily a discussion of the rationale for the inclusion of specific ethnic minority concerns in the overall evaluation program. The BART Impact Program is a comprehensive assessment of BART's impacts on the social and economic life of the San Francisco-Oakland metropolitan area. Goals of the program are to elucidate the relationships between public transit and community development and assess costs and benefits of a rail rapid transit system. Specific objectives of the BIP are to determine: (1) what the impacts are, (2) who is affected, (3) why anticipated results are (or are not) occurring, and (4) how this knowledge of BART may be useful to decision makers. The impacts on ethnic minorities fit within these objectives, especially the "who is affected."

A rationale for focusing on ethnic minorities is concern for equity. Since BART is a public transit system its benefits should ideally accrue to all segments of the population and not prove discriminatory. However, against this ideal intrudes the real world where inequality exists among social classes and ethnic groups. Careful analysis is required to determine whether or not ethnic minorities are sharing equally in both the benefits and burdens of the BART system.

The essential question posed in this paper is: Are there factors in either the history, current status or life styles of ethnic minorities that cause the impacts of a system such as BART to be felt differently for ethnic minorities than for majority whites? To answer this question an examination is made of both historical antecedents of discrimination, and current disadvantages exemplified by lower socio-economic status. These factors tend to distort both the orderly working of markets and political



participation, and in turn distort the impacts of the BART system on ethnic minorities.

## Background

In September 1974 the first trains of the Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART) ran underneath San Francisco Bay connecting Oakland and the populous Eastbay suburbs to the city of San Francisco. This was a significant event since BART is the first new fixed rail rapid transit system built in the United States in more than fifty years.

Money for the system has come from a variety of sources: a local bond issue, federal matching funds, diversion of tolls from the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge, a special one-half cent sales tax and an ad valorem tax on all real property in the three county district. Thus the burden of financing the system is spread widely on all consumers and property owners, so that it taxes virtually every person living in the three county service area.

Benefits of the new BART system have been spoken of largely in economic terms, such as: BART will increase the mobility of those who use the system by providing a speedy moderate cost alternative to the automobile or bus. It will provide a more efficient and comfortable journey to work, especially if the work trip is to downtown San Francisco or Oakland. BART may bolster the economies of these central cities by increasing their core areas' attractiveness as employment centers. In turn this should lead to new office buildings being constructed downtown, hence more tax revenues for the cities. BART should also increase property values around all of its outlying stations. BART should be a significant factor in reducing the congestion on the Bay Bridge. It should also lead to less air pollution as drivers switch from their cars to BART.

These are some of the major benefits which may possibly accrue within the area because of BART. At this point it has become apparent that some of the proposed changes are occurring and that some are not. The system at the time of this writing (November 1975) had been in transbay service for a year, but had not yet commenced weekend or night service. The system's trains have been plagued by severe mechanical problems which have affected BART's reliability. So it is impossible at this time to make any clear statements about either benefits or burdens of BART.

Serious study of the BART impacts is underway. Before BART went into operation the Department of Transportation (DOT) initiated a comprehensive evaluation of BART impacts through the Metropolitan Transportation Commission of the Bay Area. Detailed studies have been initiated in six major areas: travel behavior, environment, land use, institutions and life styles, economics and finance, and public policy. The study program is planned to take five years, ending in 1977, and the estimated cost of the program to completion is eight million dollars. It may be the most comprehensive ex post study of an urban public works project ever undertaken. This should provide definitive results of the impacts of a new transportation system on the economic and social composition of a major metropolitan region.

There appear to be two major reasons for undertaking such a large and comprehensive study effort:

1. Three metropolitan areas, Baltimore, Washington, D.C., and Atlanta, are currently building or planning fixed rail rapid transit systems much like BART. In addition, other cities (Los Angeles and Denver) are studying the possibility of constructing similar systems. Since BART is completed it seems logical that DOT study the impacts of



this system to provide guidance in planning and implementing other systems. Rich experiences, both positive and negative, are available from BART history.

2. Even if no other urban fixed rail transit facilities were contemplated, a massive public works project such as BART should be thoroughly evaluated for its own sake. It is too large a public expenditure to go without thorough analyses of its social and economic impacts.

All of the six studies are now underway. A special staff at the Metropolitan Transportation Commission is working with several consultant teams. Although some reports have been issued to date, the definitive results of the study are many months, perhaps years away.

#### The Special Study of Ethnic Minorities

There is one very significant aspect of the BART Impact Program that deserves special attention. The program requires of each of its component projects that the impacts of BART on ethnic minorities be given explicit attention. Blacks, persons of Spanish heritage,<sup>1</sup> and Asian-Americans have been singled out for this special attention. What is intended is that the effect of BART on ethnic minorities not be lost or submerged in the aggregate data. Rather, the impacts upon these ethnic groups should be noted and in many cases singled out for special attention.

It is certainly not common in comprehensive evaluations of this kind, where the focus is regional, to give special attention to ethnic subgroups. Moreover, upon reflection it is not common for public works projects to devote significant funds for research on social, as opposed to environmental, impacts. To single out minorities for special consideration

is even rarer. The lack of attention paid to social impacts of public works projects may not stem solely from lack of enthusiasm by planners and program managers. Social and economic impact analyses of public works projects on affected population subgroups are relatively new fields of inquiry and the applied methodologies are only now being developed.

#### What is Really So Different About Ethnic Minorities?

In essence, why should we study ethnic minority impacts of a large scale public system? Why not just study the aggregate impacts? These are both quite reasonable questions. On the other hand, if we continue to earnestly pursue these questions then we are making an assumption that somehow ethnic minorities are different in some significant ways from the white majority. Another way of conceptualizing this issue is that perhaps there is something in their history, culture, life styles, and economic status that makes ethnic minorities different. For purposes of the BART Impact Program the relevant issues may be whether or not any of these characteristics make BART's impact upon ethnic minorities be felt differently than on the white majority.

At this point the policy analyst must come face to face with the very thorny and contentious subject of racial differences. Some differences such as incomes, educational achievement or residential patterns are well known, if not completely understood. However, there is certainly no consensus among social scientists concerning the causes of observed cultural and behavioral differences among ethnic groups. Compounding a lack of adequate scientific knowledge on ethnic differences is a legacy of racial antagonisms and the simmering controversies over genetic versus cultural factors in intelligence. These certainly lurk beneath the surface

and are dangers for any social scientists who tread uncritically into this controversial area.

In the BIP studies, blacks, persons of Spanish heritage, and Asians are singled out for special focus. These are the major ethnic groups in the BART service area, accounting for nearly one-third of the population.<sup>2</sup> But there are other significant ethnic groups in the San Francisco Bay Area who are not being studied; for example, white ethnics, i.e., Jews, Poles, Italians, Irish, rural Southern migrants also live in the area. Why not study them? After all, many white ethnics have low incomes, limited opportunities and severe personal disadvantages. They are apparently being ignored. Or at best they are being aggregated within the overall analyses.

The reason that blacks, Chicanos and Asians are the subject of special study, and not white ethnics, can be suggested in the following three points:

1. These three ethnic groups have a disadvantaged status which has deep roots in the history of the group.
  2. Disadvantaged status has led to a position of vulnerability of these groups caused by racial discrimination.
  3. The distributional consequences of public decisions are often not made on an equitable basis for these disadvantaged ethnic groups.
- These three points are closely related and there is considerable overlap among them. Nevertheless, this paper will attempt to discuss each point and in turn work each one into an appropriate rationale for the policy of giving special emphasis to these ethnic groups in the BART Impact Program.

## The Meaning of Disadvantage

The term "disadvantage" has been used by social scientists to describe, and possibly explain, the low status of some ethnic minority groups. Educators have made extensive use of this term to describe the black or Chicano student who fails to achieve or fails to behave. Welfare dependent households are often depicted as being disadvantaged. Over the years, among some professional people such as educators and social workers, the term has become a euphemism or code word. It is a less direct manner of talking about ethnic minorities.

If the term disadvantage is to have meaning in social science research, it must have a more rigorous definition rather than remain a euphemism. A definition must address the questions: Disadvantaged by whom? Disadvantaged in relation to what? With some resolution of these questions the term disadvantage may be relevant for serious research and inquiry.

One working definition of the term disadvantage is offered by Grebler, Moore and Guzman:<sup>3</sup>

A category of people, then, can be defined as disadvantaged if society at large has acted by omission or commission to hinder a disproportionate number of its members in the development of their individual abilities.

This definition of disadvantage has useful properties. It looks to the ultimate effects of society's actions rather than intent or purpose. Acts of either omission, such as being indifferent about the welfare of certain peoples, or commission, such as Jim Crow legislation, may both produce unfavorable results upon an ethnic group. The results of these actions will result in a state of general societal disadvantage conferred upon the disadvantaged group. Another important property of this definition is

that it recognizes that the disadvantage does not accrue uniformly to each and every member of the alleged disadvantaged group, but is indicative of some disproportionate number being so affected.

It is important to remember that although an ethnic group may be considered disadvantaged, that the group itself is not homogeneous. Any ethnic group is extremely pluralistic in composition, made up of people with myriad endowments, such as physical and mental abilities and motivations. The degree of disadvantage among individuals within an ethnic group will vary enormously. For instance, all blacks may not fit comfortably under a rubric of disadvantaged. Although blacks as a group have much lower incomes than whites, all blacks are not poor. The same applies to education, health and other social indicators. But as Grebler, Moore and Guzman have stated, the group disadvantage stems from the fact that a disproportionate number have been adversely affected in some facet of their total development.

#### Historical Basis of Ethnic Group Disadvantage

The developmental impediments for ethnic groups, which we call disadvantages, do have some historical basis. This is certainly not to say that the current disadvantaged status of some ethnic groups is only the result of historical processes. The point is that the historical processes, such as slavery, internment, and segregation practices, have been, and continue to be, significant explanatory factors in any explication of the current status of ethnic minorities. While it is not the purpose here to delve deeply into American history, it is nonetheless important to posit some nexus of current disadvantaged status as the logical outcome of an historical process.

The ethnic amalgam which is the United States was created by the rich melding of diverse nationalities to produce the unique American civilization. Popular mythology presents an image of the gigantic melting pot wherein diverse peoples from Europe, Africa and Asia were molded into Americans. Like most myths it is both true and false. There is much in the concept which is obviously true. Certainly the uniqueness of America is a result of the intense cultural mixing of diverse peoples. To some extent all ethnic groups, regardless of their past or current social status, have shared in this developmental process. A trivial but symbolic example of this melding process is seen in the exotic combinations of ethnic cuisines. There is a small drive-in restaurant in Los Angeles which specializes in a kosher burrito. On the South Side of Chicago a restaurant specializes in a delicious pizza with chitlins (or chitterlings, for those not from the South). These unlikely concoctions, though not haute cuisine, rather dramatically illustrate the kind of ethnic culture overlap which sustains the melting pot metaphor.

However, separating myth from reality, the melting pot has not produced the kind of equality that the term implies. As Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall has said, "Either the Negro didn't get into the pot or he didn't get melted down enough."<sup>4</sup> There is enough truth to the melting pot image to take issue with Mr. Justice Marshall's first point, the idea of the Negro not being in the pot at all. Any examination of our culture shows that the imprint of black Americans is deeply ingrained in much of what we do and in practically all of what passes for popular culture today: in art, sports, music and other endeavors.

Marshall's second point, about not being melted down enough, is the critical observation. Maybe the fire has gone out underneath the

cauldron; or maybe black people were never in a very advantageous position in the pot; or maybe black people just take a lot more melting. But whatever the reason, there is a gigantic gap between the ideology of the melting pot and what actually has occurred. This observation is not just restricted to black Americans. Today we would have to include among the "not quite melted downs" Mexican-Americans, Puerto Ricans, and many Asian-Americans, especially Chinese and Filipinos. And we should not forget the American Indians, who are now almost one million in number, who still suffer under the most miserable and oppressive conditions of any people within this society.

Asian-Americans have historically been the victims of some of the most vicious and intense assaults upon civil liberties of any ethnic groups. Immigrants from China, Japan and the Philippines were encouraged to come to this country to work on the westward movement of the railroads and in the expanding agriculture. Before the turn of this century discriminatory immigration laws were enacted to restrict Asian migration. After the outbreak of the Second World War, Japanese-Americans in the Western States were incarcerated. Their lives were disrupted and their property confiscated.

The historical discrimination against black Americans, from slavery to modern times, is so thoroughly documented that it is unnecessary at this point to do more than mention the fact that as a group Negroes have only been free a little more than 100 years.

### Horatio Alger

Another aspect of popular American mythology was expressed by Horatio Alger, whose numerous books influenced more than one generation



of Americans. His heroes, such as Ragged Dick, successfully overcame poverty through hard work and diligence to achieve success. Alger's books were enormously popular because they struck a response in working class Americans who could identify with their own current adverse conditions and the wealth of opportunities available to them and to their children, if they would be disciplined, thrifty and hard-working, like Ragged Dick.

Like the Horatio Alger hero, each ethnic group arrived on these shores with very little in the way of material wealth. Each ethnic group endured a period of poverty and discrimination. Yet today many ethnic groups can claim notable symbols of social, economic and political progress. The waves of immigrants in the 1800s and early 1900s that settled in the eastern United States crowded into some of the worst slums and harshest living conditions that this nation has ever experienced. However, in spite of these oppressive conditions, some ethnic groups have been able to rise above these humble origins and become successful, very much like the Horatio Alger hero.

It was not too long ago that if one were to make a list of disadvantaged ethnic people in the United States the Irish would have been prominently featured somewhere near the top. The list would also have included Jews, who historically have been victims of racial prejudice and discrimination. Other disadvantaged ethnic groups at some time in the past would have been Italians, Slavs and other Central and Eastern Europeans.

Today's list of disadvantaged ethnic groups is different from the same list which would have been compiled 100 or even 50 years ago. The Irish are no longer on the list. Although the Irish maintain many trappings

of their unique ethnic culture, they have come a long way from the shanty towns and the "Irish need not apply" signs. Sons and daughters of Irish immigrants have achieved almost all of the social distinctions which are possible, including the office of President. Jews would also be stricken from today's list of disadvantaged ethnic groups. Although anti-Semitism still exists, it does not seem appropriate to consider Jews as a disadvantaged minority today. As a group Jews have the highest incomes and educational attainment of any ethnic group in the United States. In addition to income and educational attainment, Jews have been able to rise up from their ghettos and achieve prominence in every facet of American life: the arts, science and government.

Another extraordinary achievement has been registered by the Japanese. Scarcely 35 years ago Japanese-Americans were rounded up on the West Coast and forcibly removed to concentration camps during World War II. Many lost all of their property and valuable possessions, for which they have never received adequate compensation. However, since then Japanese as a group have striven and prospered in Horatio Alger fashion. As an indication of their progress, the Japanese family income is higher than that of the average white family in the United States.

#### Achievement Amid Perpetual Conflict

Achievements of ethnic groups in this country have not come without bitter conflicts. Looking backward, as the nation is about to celebrate its 200th birthday, it can be noted that this period has been marked by tumultuous conflicts based upon race and ethnicity. The Civil War, the intense race riots at the turn of the 20th Century, the activities of the Ku Klux Klan, raging anti-Semitism, the urban riots of the 1960s are harsh

reminders that racial and ethnic conflicts have been prominent features of American life. They existed before the nation was born and they exist today. Some ethnic groups, like the Irish, seem to have risen above the fray by their achievements of power, wealth and influence. Some, like the Jews, have prospered and have learned to live with discrimination. Some others, like blacks and Chicanos, have not made the same strides as some other ethnic groups, and are still disadvantaged by racial discrimination.

In spite of the seeming reality of the melting pot and of Horatio Alger images, we are faced with another concurrent reality. And that reality is that ethnicity and race have always played significant roles in America. As Sowell points out:

Despite the symbolic significance of America as a New World democracy, at no time in its history have race, class, religion, or financial conditions been small considerations.<sup>5</sup>

In spite of the progress which has been made to date, and in spite of the amalgamation of the races into a truly distinct American personality, Mr. Justice Marshall's observation is still correct, that some have not been "melted down enough."

### Special Problems of Ethnic Minorities

One of the most insightful descriptions of the special set of obstacles faced by ethnic minorities in the United States is provided in an essay written by Ralph Bunche many years ago.

But whatever the nature of the minority group, its special problems may always be translated in terms of political, economic, and social disadvantages. Group antagonisms develop, which are fed by mythical beliefs and attitudes of scorn, derision, hate and discrimination. These serve as effective social barriers and fix the social, and hence, the political and economic status of the minority population.

The mental images or verbal characterizations generally accepted as descriptive of the members of the particular racial group -- the "pictures in our heads" so aptly discussed by Walter Lippmann -- give rise to stereotypes which are of the greatest significance in race relations. These race distinctions, along with similar class and caste distinctions, are so thoroughly rooted in our social consciousness as to command serious attention in any consideration of programs whose objective is equitable treatment for minority racial groups.<sup>4</sup>

Bunche begins with the "nature of the minority group," a concept which contains some subtle but very important points when we seek to define a minority group. As an example, consider black people as a minority group. Observing them we see that they usually vote Democratic (along with the majority), are largely working class (along with most people in the United States), spend much time watching television, attending school, and doing most all of the things that the majority of the people in the United States do, day in and day out. What is being referred to by the term minority, or ethnic minority, is some bundle of racial characteristics.

In reality, the Negro population in the United States is a minority only in the narrowly racial sense. In every other respect it is subject to the same divisive influences impinging on the life of every other group in the nation.<sup>7</sup>

For the purposes of this discussion of ethnic groups, I will use Sowell's words to define them as ethnic groups "if they are generally regarded, and regard themselves, as a socially distinct group with inherited characteristics that set them apart and cause them to encounter different attitudes and behaviors than those encountered by the general population."<sup>8</sup> Blacks, Chicanos and Asian-Americans certainly fit into this description, by having perceptions of themselves as being separately identifiable ethnic people and having inherited characteristics which make

them different from the majority.

Bunche provides several key ideas upon which to fix our discussion of the kinds of disadvantages faced by ethnic minority groups. Using Bunche's quotation as a reference point, I would like to focus the remainder of this essay upon certain key ideas: economic disadvantage, political disadvantage, social barriers and equitable treatment of minorities. These are the key phrases in Bunche's statement which are extremely appropriate to the construction of a rationale for giving special attention to impacts of public policies upon minorities.

### Economic Disadvantages

The most tangible social indicator of disadvantaged status is the lower incomes of ethnic minorities. Ethnic minorities are more likely to be below the poverty level than are majority whites. Without an adequate income any individual, or group of individuals, is unable to purchase the range of goods and services which are necessary to lead a truly enriched life. Certainly a person can survive on very little. The official poverty line is determined by how much is actually required to keep a family alive at the subsistence level. But it is certainly clear that subsistence itself is not sufficient as a criterion of life's quality. Income much higher than subsistence is required if the quality of one's life is to be meaningful. Money is required for books, trips to interesting places, athletic and recreation equipment, an automobile, a television set and all of the other material things which the average family above the poverty level utilizes all the time.

In addition to a lower income, ethnic minorities face discrimination in the marketplace because many market institutions have discrimina-

tory practices. The real estate and financial institutions have a history of discriminating based upon race. Ethnic minorities have often not been able to purchase a home where they might wish, even when they have had the money to do so. Banks and savings and loan associations have been discriminatory toward who and where they will lend. The practice of "redlining," declaring through tacit agreements that mortgage loans and fire insurance will not be made within certain ethnic neighborhoods, is still a problem in most major cities.

Most of our daily economic transactions take place within the context of private markets. As individuals we purchase our food from private merchants, we pay rent to private landlords and conduct our myriad other affairs through an intricate system of voluntary transactions among private parties. The main features of this market system are its private nature and voluntary character, depending upon non-coercive transactions between individuals. The ability to transact personal affairs within this market structure depends upon the amount of income the individual has and the person's knowledge of market institutions. It is important to note that both money and information are required for the individual to properly transact his or her affairs.

Economists say that a perfectly functioning market has the following characteristics: large numbers of buyers and sellers, perfect knowledge, product homogeneity, and freedom of entry.<sup>9</sup> This is a paradigm of the perfect market. But for ethnic minorities the market may not function in this fashion. Take for instance the second criterion, perfect knowledge. Ethnic minorities may have product information deliberately withheld from them. This is most evident in real estate where housing availability in white neighborhoods may not be advertised in non-white

neighborhoods. This is perhaps the most blatant example of deliberately withholding market information.

However, there are many more subtle kinds of information withholding which are common. The very ability to react to information flows may be conditioned upon education and life styles. For instance, much information about product safety and pricing is of a technical nature. Understanding the information requires more than a minimal education. Even exposure to the various sources of consumer information cannot be taken for granted. There is much useful consumer information in magazines such as Consumer Reports and various publications of the Government Printing Office, just to mention a few sources. But the people most likely to avail themselves of such information are the well educated middle class consumers. Low income ethnic minorities, who in some ways need the information more, do not tend to avail themselves of the information they often need in making market transactions because of lower education attainment and because of differences in life style. A stronger consumerist orientation seems to come only with a more middle class life style.

One of the major tenets of a free market is apparently severely breached with regard to ethnic minorities. The information is not of the same quality or quantity for ethnic minorities. Part of this deficiency is no doubt due to lower education among ethnic minorities. Part is also probably due to differences in exposure to consumer information due to life style differences.

The third economic criterion, product homogeneity, may also be compromised with regard to ethnic minorities. The same goods on the same economic terms may not always be available to ethnic minorities. For



many years there has been controversy as to whether the poor, especially poor minorities, pay more for their goods and services. Caplovitz's book, The Poor Pay More, is a good example of the range of economic difficulties faced by the poor black and Puerto Rican consumer.<sup>10</sup> There has been much research on the subject.<sup>11</sup> Some studies have shown that the higher cost of doing business in minority areas increases the average price of goods. Some other studies have shown that the cost differentials are very small between white and non-white areas when comparing identical goods. However, within the literature there is some consensus that there is some difference in prices, quality and financing terms available in minority as opposed to non-minority areas. Some of the reasons for cost differences may be logical, such as a higher cost of doing business in minority areas due to pilferage, higher insurance costs and vandalism. But the fact remains that there is some difference in prices and qualities based upon ethnicity.

The fourth criterion, freedom of entry into the market, may also be affected by race. Ethnic minorities are not proportionally represented in business. In 1970 minority businesses accounted for only 4.3% of all businesses.<sup>10</sup> Even in minority neighborhoods the stores and other services are likely to be owned and operated by white absentee owners. The lack of business ownership on the part of minorities does not stem from a lack of desire to be in business, but to many institutional barriers which prevent minority entrepreneurs from establishing businesses. The two most discussed impediments are lack of capital, caused by discrimination on the part of financial institutions, and lack of information concerning business opportunities. Much has already been written on the subject of minority business and it is not the purpose of this paper to

delve deeply into this particular issue. This discussion is only meant to highlight the fact that there are certainly barriers, whether created through omission or by intention, that cause an under-representation of minority entrepreneurs in American business life.

The principal point to be made from the preceding discussion of market institutions is that ethnicity works in a variety of ways to distort the orderly working of markets. Thus, economic disadvantages stem in large measure from the fact that ethnic minorities are unable to compete in the market place as equals. This inequality emanates from both disproportionately low incomes and from lack of knowledge of the workings of complex market institutions. Any attempt to explicate economic differences based upon ethnicity must take these two factors into account.

#### Political Disadvantages

In spite of the fact that the Constitution, and a spate of more recent legislation, guarantees equal political rights to all citizens, ethnic minorities are still politically disadvantaged. One indicator is the fact that ethnic minorities do not share in the exercise of political power in anywhere near their proportional representation in the population. Some statistics will bear this out. In 1973 there were only 2,621 black elected officials, which was only one half of one percent of the total number of elected officials in the country.<sup>13</sup> Parity would require that the number of black elected officials be increased twenty-fold. The same kind of under-representation is probably similar for other minorities.

The same factor holds true of politically appointed boards and

commissions since they are usually reflective of their appointees and the interests that they represent. Therefore it is not surprising to find that appointed boards and commissions, such as city planning commissions, police commissions, school boards, and assorted and sundry special districts do not include large numbers of minorities.

Some of the more common reasons for the lack of minority political representation are the apathy of minority groups and the conscious maneuvering of the majority to disenfranchise minorities. Some part of the political apathy of minorities may be the after effects of many years of repression. For instance, blacks in the South were prevented from voting since Reconstruction by legal devices such as poll taxes and complex registration procedures to outright physical intimidation. Since most urban blacks are only two or three generations removed from this kind of widespread repression, it will perhaps take some time to overcome these lingering effects. In the North the practice of gerrymandering districts to reduce the potential bloc power of minorities has been widespread. Of course, this practice was not invented to disenfranchise blacks and Chicanos. It has been a tactic used against all ethnic groups for more than a century.

Whatever the causes of non-parity in political representation, the result is often that ethnic minorities do not receive appropriate benefits from political decisions. In fact, ethnic minorities may often be the recipients of a disproportionate burden of the real costs of public actions. Political decisions which often affect minorities are made without an adequate voice from the minorities who may be drastically affected by the public actions. This is often a feature of politically

initiated public works projects and public programs, such as urban renewal and highway construction. Important decisions as to where and how redevelopment projects will be undertaken, where highway or transit routes will pass, where airports are located, where power plants are sited are ultimately political decisions made by elected officials or their appointees. These kinds of decisions have powerful long-lasting social and economic effects upon all people in a city or region, including the minorities. The history of such public decisions, especially about locating massive public projects, is that ethnic minorities bear a disproportionate amount of the disruption and other costs. Minorities seem to suffer more in terms of the negative externalities of the public decisions. Yet it is these politically disadvantaged ethnic minorities who have the least input in the political decision making process, even though they often have so much at stake.

The history of BART seems to bear out some of this. Shortly after World War II, many influential business leaders and politicians began to seriously consider a new rail facility which would cross under the San Francisco Bay and connect the Bay Area counties. The business and political groups were joined by urban planners and others who were interested in a more orderly pattern of urban growth and who saw BART as an important growth inducing and regulating instrument.

However, the history of BART's early planning process shows no active participation of minorities in any capacity. There were no major contributions from black, Chicano or Asian representatives in the planning of any phases of the system. Of course this was in the late 1940s and 1950s, before citizen participation became de rigueur. Now it would be impossible to conceive of such a major urban project getting only the

scrutiny of elites. Today it would have to have more than a perfunctory review by all affected parties, and this would include ethnic minorities.

The absence of minority input in any of the planning or construction phases of BART has been the subject of much controversy and consternation. In San Francisco, Oakland and Berkeley minority neighborhoods were disrupted. Aside from the physical disruptions there are other sore points. The system appears to be designed to handle mainly suburban commuters rather than handle the ordinary travel demands of minorities, who mostly live in the central cities. This is the most serious allegation against BART. Whether or not the system as designed is grossly inequitable is one of the research tasks to be performed in the BART impact studies which are now underway.

#### Social Barriers and Disadvantage

A social barrier is likely to be any institution, activity, standard, law or informal set of codes which impedes an individual from achieving his or her maximum potential. An individual can be held back by a lack of access to educational opportunities which would provide skills and training for certain occupations. There may also be an inability to make contacts with persons and institutions outside the immediate confines of the ethnic group. One example might be the college graduate who is unable to enter banking or stock brokerage because of an inability to make the appropriate contacts within the small group who dominate such occupations. Another example would be the high school graduate who is unable to enter an apprenticeship program for a skilled trade such as plumbing or electrical work. In addition to overt discrimination, the person may not be able to place himself or herself in a position to obtain information con-

cerning opportunities by virtue of his or her being a perennial outsider, a position faced by the bulk of ethnic minorities. This kind of information exclusion may be as detrimental as overt discrimination in the ultimate effect upon the individual.

Exclusion of minorities from opportunities and flows of information is often justified on the basis of stereotypes held by the majority. In spite of the fact that most Americans, including ethnic minorities, have a tremendous amount in common, i.e., living patterns, work habits, recreational preferences, religious practices, they are identified by those racial characteristics which lead to stereotypes. Group antagonisms are aroused because of these images of the slow-talking shuffling Negro, obsequious Asian and lazy profligate Mexican. These antagonisms are abetted by conflict among groups in society attempting to gain advantage and dominance over others to improve their relative positions. Such conflicts serve to reinforce the various kinds of social discrimination commonly foisted upon ethnic minorities.

One of the most unpleasant stereotypes is that of "little black Sambo," known to generations of American schoolchildren. It is difficult to know just how many black youngsters received serious psychic blows in early childhood by having to read about themselves in such a derogatory and simple-minded fashion. Sambo appeared in many textbooks for many years.

To grasp the significance of social barriers as a source of group disadvantage, we should again refer to the mythical Horatio Alger heroes. Horatio Alger's heroes overcame all obstacles, poverty and negative social status, to achieve success. However, a pessimist might say that since Ragged Dick, and the other heroes, were white it was possible for them

to succeed with some perseverance and good luck. But a minority youngster might find that perseverance and a little bit of luck are insufficient today to rise above all of the impediments or social barriers. Thus, social barriers based upon ethnicity are the kinds of obstacles that would stump even Ragged Dick, who was not discriminated against because of color, denied entry to better schools because of race, or kept from knowledge of opportunities because of stereotyping. These are some of the things that are social barriers which are both real and extremely difficult to surmount.

### Differences in Group Perception

There is yet another side of ethnic differences which is very important in seeking to explicate impacts or outcomes of policy decisions. Due to numerous factors, social and economic, the perceptions of and response to some kinds of stimuli may be different for various ethnic groups. Here it must be admitted that we are not entirely upon firm scientific ground. But it is not unreasonable to suppose that because some ethnic minorities have had different experiences both here in America and in their native lands that there would be different perceptions of the same phenomenon among different ethnic groups. As an example, take residential density. Do perceptions of what constitutes a dense environment differ among ethnic groups? We find almost astronomical densities of living and working conditions in Chinatown that might be intolerable to other ethnic groups. Thus it may be impossible to posit standards of high and low densities in Chinatown using European standards. Or is this just a transitory phase in the Asian acculturation? It must be remembered that the tenements in the Jewish ghetto in the lower east side of Manhattan were warren'd at even higher densities than currently found in Chinatown.



Do patterns of family life and familial associations influence the perceptions of ethnic minorities differently? For instance, there are some parallels in the current family structure of Mexican-Americans and earlier Italian-Americans. There are close family ties, extended families which look inward and a lack of intense aspirations for educational attainment. These kinds of cultural based family situations may be weakened among Spanish-heritage Americans through acculturation as they have been among Italians, and may prove transitory.

The point being made here is that there probably are differences among minority groups caused by differences in culture (broadly defined). Experiences in an urban setting and differences in life styles may make ethnic minorities react differently to social stimuli. What one group might find acceptable, another group might find offensive. What is acceptable architecture to one life style might be very unaesthetic to another. For example, take noise as one kind of phenomenon. Are some ethnic groups more tolerant of noise than others? If this is so, then what one ethnic group might consider to be a repugnant noise level, another might find acceptable.

But if one group seems tolerant of some phenomenon, such as a level of noise which might be unacceptable to others, is this a difference in noise perception or a difference in political sophistication? The correlation may be between political sophistication and adverse reaction rather than cultural characteristics. For instance, a middle class neighborhood may be more prone to complain about noise to public officials and write letters to the editor, while some ethnic minorities may just suffer in silence.

Admittedly, we do not know much about real differences in perceptions

and attitudes based upon ethnicity. It is possible that such differences as we observe in culture and life style may in turn lead to some differences in perceptions among ethnic groups. It is interesting to note that the BART Impact Studies do admit this possibility. The Institutions and Life Styles and the Environment studies may give some evidence, one way or another, of the impacts of life styles and cultures on the perceptions of BART impacts.

### Class Distinctions

So far in this discussion of ethnic minorities there has been little emphasis given to class structure. The emphasis has been upon disadvantaged minorities with no implications about variety in the income distribution and general social status within the ethnic groups. However, much of the essence of ethnic disadvantage has origins in the general class structure as well as ethnicity. Banfield, in a recent work, has striven to make some distinction between class behavior and racial behavior.<sup>14</sup> Although his opinions are controversial, his contribution to the literature on urban problems has been this enunciation of class differences as opposed to ethnic differences. Some distinction should be made between those activities which are ethnically induced and those which are merely expressions of a difference in class structure. Very often the associated issues of class are lost within general discussions of problems of race.

There is a growing middle class within ethnic minorities who share the same values and life styles as the other middle class white Americans. In outward appearance, in terms of income, education, level of consumption and style of life, they show very few, if any, signs of being disadvantaged.

If we can revert to the benign use of a stereotype, consider the case of a black or Asian physician who has a high income and lives in a fashionable suburban community. Is this person disadvantaged in any real sense? Or the more appropriate question may be: In what sense, or in what manner, should this individual be singled out for special attention in evaluating impacts of public policy decisions upon ethnic minorities?

Although the example of a minority physician is an extreme case, it does point out that within any ethnic group class differentiation is important. As we go up the income, and by inference class, ladder the degree of disadvantage faced by individuals goes from the very obvious and direct kind of discrimination which might be faced by a black factory worker who finds racial impediments in his path to advancement to foreman, to the successful black physician who desires to one day become head of the American Medical Association. Neither may be likely, but the first case is seen as a public policy issue and the second is not. Obstacles which face the black worker's advancement are the concern and object of public policies that have enforcement mechanisms such as the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and Federal Employment Practices Commission and other anti-discriminatory measures. But in the latter case, in which discrimination may be just as much a determinant, there is not as much public concern. In the latter case we limit our concern to the conscience of professionals. In both cases we are observing discrimination based upon ethnicity but the policy responses are quite different. No doubt the difference in public reactions is due to the perceptions of the very nature of the disadvantage. The black worker, lower on the economic ladder, is more disadvantaged than the physician in his ability to cope with racial factors. The physician at the other

end of the economic and class ladder, although also the victim of racial discrimination, is not thought of as a disadvantaged person.

When it comes to the analysis of BART impacts, these questions of intra-group class are important. Life styles and social characteristics of upper income minorities may not be very different from whites with comparable incomes. At some point a line must be drawn within the ethnic group itself as to when or under what conditions the concept of disadvantage loses most of its meaning. Here is one suggestion of how the issues of intra-group class might be handled. If the disadvantage adheres to low or moderate income or to a lower working class life style, then the concept of societal disadvantage is easily comprehended. Where the disadvantage to ethnic individuals adheres to geographic areas, such as heavily impacted minority neighborhoods, which may have a high crime rate and poor housing, then the concern is upon all residents regardless of income or life style. This would include both the black factory worker and the physician if they lived in the same neighborhood. Thus, the disadvantage is made manifest both in terms of socio-economic status and geographic place. These seem to be the likeliest areas of interest in the BART impact studies. The exception of these two criteria would be the upper income minority person who lives outside the ethnic community. At this point he ceases to be of major concern in that portion of the special BART impacts which deal with minority impacts.

#### Equitable Treatment of Minorities

As America has grown and prospered, all its people regardless of

ethnic origin have participated in the benefits, although some have reaped more than others. In spite of distributional imbalances, there has always been a strong and firm public voice urging that the fruits of the national economic harvest be distributed as widely as possible. As the nation prospered all people should be able to share in the opportunity for prosperity. This American doctrine of equal opportunity was given perhaps its most symbolic expression in the distribution of free homesteads to any families willing and hardy enough to settle the Northwest and Southwest Territories. Another example is the social reform movements which helped the earlier European immigrants improve their housing, health and educational opportunities. One could go on and on, through the Abolitionist movement, underground railroad, immigrant assistance measures, to today's equal opportunity laws in tracing this American ethic.

There is one further historical feature of American public policy that needs to be discussed, and that is the evolution of the principles of equity in public administration. Horizontal equity, treating equals equally, has a basis in the Constitution and in more than two centuries of governmental practice. One man one vote, for all citizens, is its cornerstone. However, an evolving concept of social equity is concerned with the distributional consequences of public actions. Its premise is that benefits from public activities should be distributed in an egalitarian manner to those most in need. This goes beyond equality of opportunity and begins to imply equality of results, especially as far as public activities are involved. This principle is not as firmly based

in the Constitution or Declaration of Independence as is equality of opportunity, but is based upon what appears to be an evolving ethic. What it seems to mean in actual practice is that any public activity should not exacerbate existing inequalities.

#### Non-symmetrical Nature of Costs and Benefits

When we look at the consequences of public programs and public works projects we see that their effect upon ethnic minority groups may not always be symmetrical. Every major program or major public works project brings with it promises and opportunities for social and/or economic betterment. On the other hand, there is usually some kind of social disruption or economic sacrifice which accompanies it. Using the BART system as an example, we can see that on the opportunity side the construction of a new rail rapid transit system will increase the mobility of people in the area. With this increase in mobility there may be increased economic opportunity and increased opportunities for social and recreational activities. On the other hand, to build such a system requires economic sacrifices through paying higher taxes to support the service. For BART, the residents in the three county area had to pass a bond issue to pay for some of the capital costs. These bonds are supported, among other sources of financing, by a general property tax levy on the three county BART area. Many of these property owners are ethnic minorities since almost one-third of the population in the BART district are ethnic minority groups. Another side of this same coin is that in order to build the system there had to be some physical disruption. Tracks had to be laid over areas which were formerly in other uses. Houses had to be demolished and businesses had to be closed

for the construction of the system.

What becomes very apparent in terms of looking at costs and benefits to racial minorities is the very non-symmetry of the results. On the opportunities side ethnic minorities may not be availing themselves of the opportunities offered by BART in the same ways that majority whites are. That the system has enhanced opportunities for mobility for suburban whites is evident. But have ethnic minorities had their mobility enhanced? In short, have ethnic minorities gained what the majority whites have gained from the system? If the BART system turns out to be like so many other public works projects, we will find that the ability to enjoy the benefits and opportunities of the system are closely related to income and social status. If that is true there will be a disproportionate, or non-symmetrical, return to ethnic minorities, based upon the costs to support the system which are borne proportionately. Also where there are social and economic disruptions from the public projects we find that some groups, especially ethnic minorities, are more vulnerable to the adverse impacts. Vulnerability is a very important concept to recognize when analyzing any public policy. One area of vulnerability is economic vulnerability caused by disproportionately lower incomes of minority groups. The taxes which are levied to support BART, like many other public projects, are not levied solely on ability to pay principles, but tend to be regressive. Ad valorem property taxes and sales taxes may not be very equitable since the burden of such taxes falls more heavily upon ethnic minorities and others with lower incomes. In light of the tax structure, we can ask whether the benefits which have been derived from this system are enough to compensate for the relatively greater fiscal load that minorities have to bear in order to pay for these

opportunities. Another aspect of vulnerability is the degree of social dislocation which occurs from building any massive public works project. To examine this, we might look at where the tracks were placed and who was dislocated. And then we might seek to determine whether or not upper income neighborhoods have been disturbed to the same extent that lower income neighborhoods have been disturbed.

Experience has shown with the urban redevelopment programs and highway programs of the 1950s and 1960s that it is precisely the vulnerable ethnic communities which are much more prone to disruption by massive public projects. The term "Negro removal" which became a synonym for urban renewal is one expression for the non-symmetry of costs and benefits which occurs because of the vulnerability of ethnic groups. This kind of disruption has happened in almost every city in the U.S. which has engaged in redevelopment and highway projects.

It seems that the risk, losses and costs to ethnic minority groups are always disproportionate. Ethnic minorities seem to share more of the costs and participate in fewer of the benefits. This reflects a basic imbalance in the social system, and is why we must give serious attention to the equitable treatment of ethnic minority groups when we contemplate public policy decisions.

## CONCLUSION

To summarize, there are several reasons for studying the impact of the BART system upon these special groups.

1. Equity. The most important reason for singling out ethnic minorities for special study relates to basic equity issues in public policy decisions, in this case transportation planning. A public trans-



portation system should offer equal opportunities for mobility to all citizens. The transportation system should serve both rich and poor, both handicapped and those in good health, both young and old, both sexes and all races equally. The system should not perpetuate imbalances in income or social status.

One allegation, which is a sharp criticism of BART, is that the system does not serve all groups equally. It is viewed by some to be a transportation system primarily for the benefit of affluent commuters, and one that does not provide an equally high level of service to the poor, handicapped, or ethnic minorities. To investigate this particular allegation and determine whether or not BART perpetuates these inequities, we must look at the distributional benefits of BART.

2. Discrimination. Minorities are treated differently from other people in society. Racial discrimination and discrimination against the handicapped and elderly has tended to distort the working of markets and adversely affect the political process. It has created segregated residential patterns which affect proximity to jobs, access to recreation opportunities, and which impinge on many other facets of life. Within this context, what has BART done, or not done, to the status of ethnic minorities and other disadvantaged groups?

3. Incomes. Ethnic minorities, handicapped and elderly tend to have much lower economic status. The benefits of the BART system may be closely related to income.

4. Social Differences. Differences in values and life styles may cause disadvantaged persons to perceive BART's impacts in a different way. Differences in culture may impart differences in attitudes as to

- how the system should be used for recreation, shopping, or work trips. Cultural differences may result in different perceptions of BART impacts being felt by ethnic minorities.

5. Demography. The demographic profile of the three county BART area juxtaposed against the placement of the tracks and stations reveals another rationale for a special study of the impacts of the system upon ethnic minorities. Not only is the population of the BART service area one-third ethnic minority, but more than one-third of the stations are located in what could be considered ethnic minority neighborhoods. Twelve of 34 stations are located in areas in which more than one-half of the population in the surrounding community is ethnic minority. Thus the propinquity of BART and ethnic minorities requires that other aspects of the system be examined. For instance, are the benefits to ethnic minorities, through their daily use of the system, enough to compensate for the disruptions caused by the physical placement of the tracks and stations within these ethnic communities?

In conclusion, there are certainly valid reasons to single out ethnic minorities as particularly significant groups in the analysis of public policies. Although there is obviously some cost involved and some overlap and duplication, it is worth the effort.

## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>The term Spanish Heritage is used to denote that ethnic group which is often called Mexican-American, chicano, Latino, Puerto Rican, Spanish Surname, or Spanish Language. Spanish Heritage is one of the terms used by the Census in 1970 to identify this ethnic group and is used here.

<sup>2</sup>The population of the BART service area is as follows:

<u>Total Population</u>	<u>100%</u>
Black	12.5
Spanish Heritage	12.3
Oriental	<u>7.3</u>
Total percentage minority	32.1%

<sup>3</sup>L. Grebler, J. W. Moore and R. C. Guzman, The Mexican-American People (New York: Macmillan, 1970), p. 24.

<sup>4</sup>I have no exact literary citation for Mr. Justice Thurgood Marshall's quotation. However, I have heard him make this remark in at least one lecture.

<sup>5</sup>T. Sowell, Race and Economics (New York: David McKay, 1975), P. 60.

<sup>6</sup>R. J. Bunche, "A Critical Analysis of the Tactics and Programs of Minority Groups," Journal of Negro Education, IV, 3 (July 1935), 308-320. Reprinted in Negro Protest Thought in the Twentieth Century, F. L. Broderick and A. Meier, eds. (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1965), p. 162.

<sup>7</sup>Bunche, op. cit., p. 163.

<sup>8</sup>Sowell, op. cit., p. vi.

<sup>9</sup>G. J. Stigler, The Theory of Price (New York: Macmillan, 1966), p. 88.

<sup>10</sup>D. Caplovitz, The Poor Pay More (New York: The Free Press, 1967).

<sup>11</sup>For a bibliography of numerous works on the general subject, see: Marketing and the Low Income Consumer (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Government Printing Office).

<sup>12</sup>According to the U.S. Department of Commerce (Minority-Owned Businesses:

\* 1969, U.S. Government Printing Office), in 1969 there were 322,000 minority-owned businesses out of a total of 7,489,000 businesses in the United States.

<sup>13</sup> Figures are available in the Statistical Abstract of the United States, Department of Commerce (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1973). Statistics were not available for other ethnic minority groups.

<sup>14</sup> E. C. Banfield, The Unheavenly City (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1970).



